



Notice

Hardhat Update: Summer 2012

The Missoula Technology and Development Center (MTDC) has received some reports of cracking, delamination, and broken suspension keys in hardhats. These reports of hardhat damage serve as a reminder to perform frequent inspections. If you find a hardhat with unexpected damage, please contact Mary Ann Davies at MTDC: mdavies@fs.fed.us or 406-329-3981.

Damage



Hairline cracking



Delamination



Broken suspension keys

Most of the damage has been found in Bullard Wildfire hardhats (FH911C and FH911H) manufactured since 2008. It may be due to exposure to chemicals, so please be sure to avoid using chemicals and clean your hardhat regularly with mild soap and warm water. Bullard is investigating the cause of the damage in depth.

Wildland fire suppression personal protective equipment should be purchased through the General Services Administration (GSA) Wildland Fire Equipment Catalog (FSH 6309.32 and FAR 8.002). If you have a damaged hardhat that was purchased through GSA, please complete a Product Quality Deficiency Report [PQDR form 368](#) and fax it to GSA at: 816-926-5561.

Inspection

Inspect your hardhat shell and suspension system at least monthly, if not more frequently, with this checklist:

- Remove and clean the suspension system with mild soap and warm water.
- Inspect suspension system for cracks, cut or frayed straps, torn or frayed straps, torn headband or size adjustment slots. Replace any suspension system that is damaged.
- Clean the shell with mild soap and warm water. Do not use solvents or abrasives.
- Compress the shell from both sides about 1 inch with your hands and then release the pressure. The shell should return to its original shape quickly, exhibiting elasticity. Compare the elasticity with that of a new shell. If the shell being tested does not have as much elasticity as the new shell, or if the shell cracks, it should be replaced immediately.

If you must purchase from other than GSA [Wildland Fire Equipment Catalog 2012], when the total value of the line item is \$100 or more, but less than \$5,000, procurement from other sources is authorized: provided, that a written justification shall be prepared and placed in the purchase file stating that such action is judged to be in the best interest of the Government in terms of the combination of quality, timeliness, and cost that best meets the requirement. Cost comparisons shall include the agency administrative cost to affect a local purchase.

—Excerpt from FSH 6309.32

Fit

A 2008 redesign to the suspension on the Bullard NFPA 1977 compliant hardhats has caused some users to complain about discomfort. The new suspension system provides less space between the hardhat and the user's head and may allow sharp corners to cause pressure points. MTDC and the San Dimas Technology and Development Center will continue to evaluate hardhats for fit and comfort.

For a better fit there are two options, the Morning Pride and the extra-large Bullard. The Morning Pride hardhats are available in the GSA Wildland Fire Equipment Catalog 2012. Bullard will offer an extra-large full brim hardhat that is NFPA 1977 compliant this summer. The extra-large Bullard hardhat will not be sold in the GSA Wildland Fire Equipment catalog.



Bullard extra-large (FH911XL)



Morning Pride full brim (NFES 0116)



Morning Pride cap style (NFES 0117)